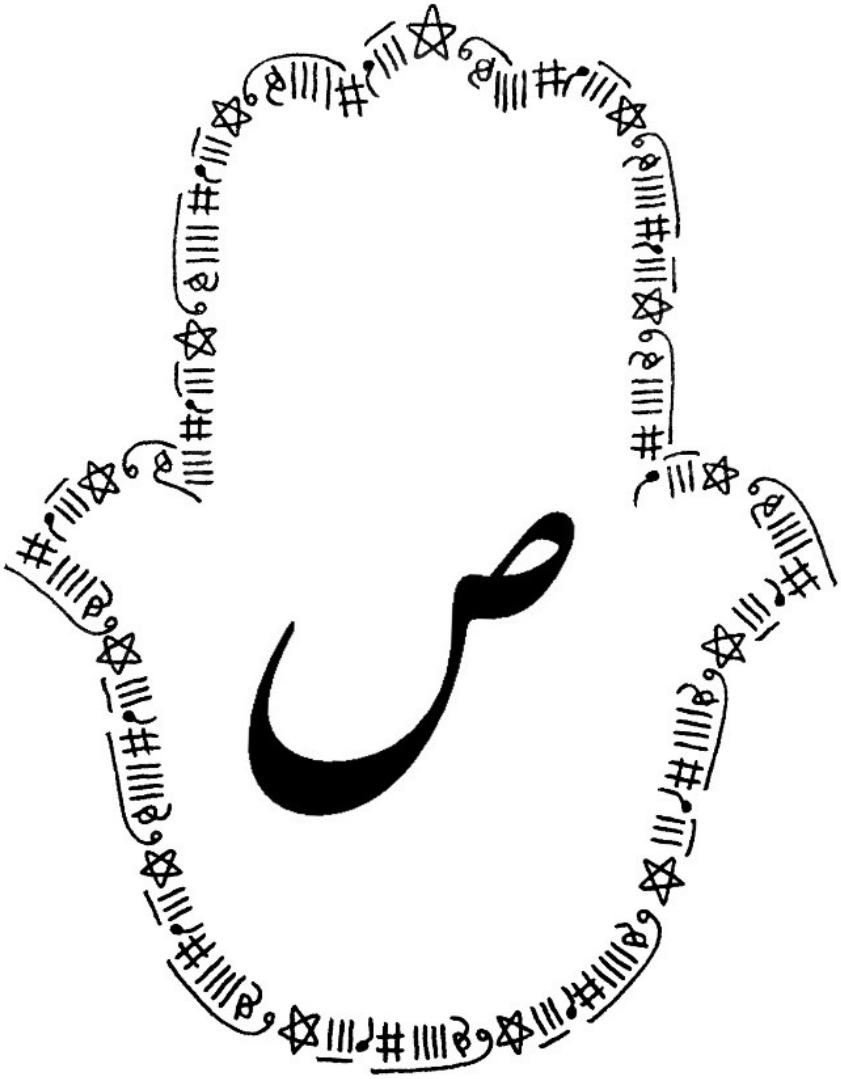
Response regarding God's Knowledge of

Universals and Particulars



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In the Name of God the Knower of all things!

Praise be unto God the Knower of all things, unchanged and unchangeable, in their ***creation, sustenance, life, death*** *and* ***resurrection****! And the Splendor of God be upon the Chosen Ones from before and after; and praise be unto God, the All-Knowing Knower of the worlds!*

As for the matter at hand: thus saith the Camphorated Servant of the Truly Real! Following from my second response to you, you have now asked me to explain to you our position regarding God's immutable knowledge of universals and particulars, since this matter goes to the heart of the question around the **Simple-Expansive Reality** (*basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa*) which we have now explained to you in two parts. Here now, in brevity, the discussion is augmented around this specific question.

We will first underscore the fact that terms and predicates such as 'universal' and 'particular', 'absolute' and 'relative', can only exist in a relationship between polarities and opposites wherein neither term of the opposite can exist or be defined without the other. In other words, neither term possesses an intrinsic existence without the other setting its limits, boundaries, and so definition. Thus a 'universal' can only be *universal* by virtue of a totality of particulars that constitute a universality whilst a particular can only be what it is in virtue of a universality of particulars facing it that then constitutes its singular identity as opposed to those multitude of others. However, here attempting to employ the five predicables of the Aristotelian organon[1] to understand the overall situation can mislead us since we are speaking of that which by definition cannot be made divisible into parts: God, glorified and High be It, Who possesses neither an equal, nor a counterpart, nor a likeness, nor a peer, nor a similitude, nor a universal or a particular! And since this is the case, any discussion of

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the *howness* of God's knowledge of universals and particulars must be approached from other routes.

In our last response to you, we cited the *ḥadīth* attributed to the Learned One, the Sixth Imām (ع), regarding the **Primal Will**:

God created the Will by itself then It created all created things through the Will![2]

Here again, this report will serve as our proof text for discussing this specific topic which is related to the last.

We say that God at the level of the **Pre-Eternal Essence** only knows Itself since at that level of the Ipseity there is nothing with It other than Itself to know. This knowledge is comprehensive without such comprehensiveness implying parts. Yet this knowledge of Itself does not inhabit the dualism of subject and object regarding Itself because there is no content to this knowledge but Itself to know such that absolute Perfection knows only Itself and nothing else because there is nothing but Itself to know. Nor does such knowledge of Itself change or alter inasmuch as this knowledge of Itself is *already-always* as it has always been, since neither time nor eternity touches It because neither exists with It as both are relations of opposites, and It possesses neither an opposite or any relation thereunto. Thus there is nothing about Itself that it did not know at one point that it comes to know at another. Given this, Plotinus is correct in the **Enneads** when suggesting that *the One does not know Itself* (**V.3**)[3] since with such definition knowing implies the duality of subject and object and so delimitation regarding that which is absolutely non-delimited. Yet the Pre-Eternal Essence of the One does in fact know Itself non-delimitedly without there being a duality of subject or object therein, so in this respect Plotinus is wrong insofar as his definition of 'knowledge' denotes the delimitation of subject, object and content,

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since the Ipseity's knowledge of Itself is non-delimited and does not require subject, object or content since It is impregnably sanctified beyond such delimitations. As such, and as it were from this vantage point, the awareness of the Essence is Itself and Its Ipseity is Its own infinite self-awareness of Itself as, unchanged and unalterable, a single thing, a single act, a single moment. This is implied to us unequivocally by the wording of the *ḥadīth* of the **Hidden Treasure** itself wherein the All-High proclaims Its own self-awareness at that level of inscrutability as being the **Hidden Treasure** when referring to Itself in the first person as '*I was a Hidden Treasure*' (*kuntu kanzan makhfīyan*). Therefore, this Self-Knowledge of the Essence can neither be understood in terms of a universal knowledge or a particular knowledge, since Its Reality is both and neither, *and God warns you about Its Self* (**Qur'ān 3:28**), other than that this Ipseity can only be known as *already-always* remaining '*the Most Impregnable*, *the Most Holy*' (*al-ʿamna al-aqdas*) with any true noesis regarding Its Nature forever barred and bolted shut from eternity and temporality alike!

Thus the question of God's knowledge of universals and particulars in no wise relates to the level of the non-manifest and non-delimited Pre-Eternal Essence. Rather this question only becomes relevant at the level of Manifestation below It which is the level of the **Inclusive Unity** (*wāḥidīya*) and the **Primal Will** from which all things emerge. And indeed the **Primal Will** does in fact know all things -whether *as things* or not - in their universality and in their particularity since, as we indicated earlier in our last response, the **Primal Will** is the **Absolute Existence** (*wujūd muṭlaq*) to which every relative existent is directly related in its **creation**, **sustenance**, **life** and **death** as this level is the level of the **Simple-Expansive Reality** (*basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa*) which is all things but not any single one of them. And the manner of Its knowing of things, whether universally or particularly, is by the **Primal Will's** *already-always* **Voliting** of

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each thing through Its **Determination** by Its **Authorization** within Its **Realization** in the **Appointed Time** of Its **Decree**.

Let us take the seven letters of '*Be, and it is*' (كن فيكون), for instance. The ***kāf*** (ك) as the **will** (*mashʿīa*) of a thing is known by the **Primal Will** as the essential-being (*kaynūnīya*) of that thing; and the ***nūn*** (ن) as the **volition** (*irāda*) of a thing is known by the **Primal Will** as the inner light (*nūr al-bāṭin*) of that thing inextricably joined to its essential-being; and the ***fāʾ*** (ف) as the **determination** (*qadar*) of a thing is known by the **Primal Will** by the very thought (*fikr*) of that thing in its unique inner self-awareness; and the ***yāʾ*** (ي) as the **authorization** (*qaḍāʾ*) of a thing is known by the **Primal Will** as the alertness or wakeful consciousness (*yaqẓa*) of that thing; and the second ***kāf*** (ك) as the **realization** (*imḍāʾ*) of a thing is known by the **Primal Will** as the *beingness* (*kawnīya*) of that thing in relation to other things; and the *wāw* (و), which is the appointed time (*ajal*) of a thing, is known by the **Primal Will** as the material consciousness (*waʿī*) of that thing with its five senses and how this thing comes to know the contents of the external world around it through them; and, finally, the second ***nūn*** (ن) as the decree (*kitāb*) of a thing is known by the **Primal Will** as the outer light (*nūr al-ẓāhir*) of that thing, which constitutes the cumulative sum of all of that thing's thoughts, cogitations, intelligible and actual realizations as well as all actions, great or small, deliberate or not. And see how each thing is known by the **Primal Will** by two lights – the inner and the outer light – which is a meaning to *Light upon Light* (*nūr ʿala nūr*) (**Qurʾān 24:35**) as well as 'the First' (*al-awwal*) and 'the Last' (*al-ākhir*) and 'the Manifest' (*al-bāṭin*) and 'the Hidden' (*al-ẓāhir*), *for It is knowing of all things* (**Qurʾān 57:3**); and so all things great or small are with the **Primal Will** in the state of every moment, before the state of every moment and after the state of every moment *in a Perspicuous Record*

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(**Qurʾān 10:61**) that now establishes for you the axiom whereby the **Primal Will** possesses comprehensive knowledge of both the universals and particulars. This above should also act for you as a gloss upon the Learned One's (ع) saying that *God created the Will by itself then It created all created things through the Will!*

Now, as Its creation from out of Its own non-delimited Self-Knowledge without anything, the **Primal Will** as **Absolute Existence** (*wujūd muṭlaq*) looks upon its Lord, the Pre-Eternal Essence of the Ipseity, as the **Being of the Truly Real** (*wujūd al-ḥaqq*), that is the *Being-beyond-Being*, which is, as it were, an emulation of the act of the Pre-Eternal Essence in Its own act of *already-always* Self-Knowledge; and this *already-always* turning to its Lord makes it turn to itself as a consequence of which the essences of all things *already-always* emanate and flow out from the **Primal Will**, since such is the penetration of **Knowledge** as it becomes **Power** wherein the power of divine knowledge produces the multiplicities of the world that all return to It as they originated with It. Thus this world and all worlds are the best of possible worlds[4] inasmuch they are the theatre for the infinite overflow and outflow of God's Singular **Knowledge** and **Power** as the **Hidden Treasure** desiring to be known in all things, great or small, universal and particular, high and low alike.

And thus is the matter sealed, so reflect, and say: *praise be unto God, the Knower of all the worlds!*

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8th of ʿIshq NUR 19

27 February 2025 CE

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Notes

[1] I.e. genus, species, differentia, property and accident.

[2] خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْمَشِيئَةَ بِنَفْسِهَا ثُمَّ خَلَقَ الْأَشْيَاءَ بِالْمَشِيئَةِ

Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, **Book of the Hiero-Intelligence and acosmic ignorance** (*kitāb al-ʿaql wa'l-jahl*) (بَابُ الْإِرَادَةِ أَنَّهَا مِنْ صِفَاتِ الْفِعْلِ وَسَائِرِ صِفَاتِ الْفِعْلِ).

[3] https://www.loebclassics.com/view/LCL444/1984/volume.xml (retrieved 27 February 2025).

[4] Even in this time of peak insanity among the majority of the human subject.

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